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Amplifying this week's contributors

ANCIENT HISTORY

M. I. FINLEY

Politics in the Ancient World
152pp. Cambridge University Press.
£15 (paperback, £5.95).
0521254892

For better or for worse we owe to the Greeks and the Romans the fact that Western civilization regards politics as the central concern of man. Few areas of our culture have escaped the fundamental perception of Aristotle that man is a "political animal", or in modern terminology a social being, whose highest good can only be attained by means of association; the laws of association are therefore uniquely privileged in the science of the study of man. Politics is the royal art.

So we see our history as the history of politics and power, of action and event in peace and war. Our freedom is measured in terms of our ability to influence or determine decisions concerned with the community at large, a view which, as the Greeks saw, leads ultimately to the paradox that the freest and the happiest man is the tyrant or dictator. Our analysis of the community is directed towards the way that works, its organization for action and change, not the way that it creates satisfaction. Our economics relates to the manipulation of wealth, and to the tools necessary for the acquiring, use or distribution of material goods: we ignore the "utility factor", why men actually choose to live in a non-economic world. We recognize with Max Weber that the essential differentiating factor of our civilization is a political one, the "formal rationality" of our institutions.

This rationality is carried over into the understanding of areas of our culture which might otherwise seem to offer different principles of organization. The metaphors of politics, system, organization, hierarchies, influences, schools, purposes, justifications, structures, are the starting-points for our attempts to understand human creativity in the arts and literature. Even our religion does not help us, for it is a Jewish religion organized for the nation-state; and ever since Saint Augustine saw belief as membership of the city of God, that last refuge of the individual has usually been accepted as a social phenomenon, a question of groups, heresies, hierarchies of command, laws, rules, rituals, observances, obedience. The artist, the man of passion and the mystic remain obscure irritants, unless they can be related to a group, a set of doctrines, or a purpose. Even the external world has been reduced to its political forms, and subjected to power in the avowed purpose of science to colonize and control nature, to understand in order to use. When faced with other cultures, we call in experts armed with Western theories to explain what may in fact be quite outside our rules of explanation; they apply sophisticated forms of functional analysis or structural theories to normalize the otherness of systems incompatible with ours.

Yet Western society, for all its success, is unusual, perhaps even unique, and certainly much less normal than our own versions of the history and culture of others allow: we are perhaps the only major civilization to have organized ourselves and our perceptions on the political model. Even here we have our problems; according to Edwin Ardener: "Ethnographers report that women cannot be reached so easily as men; they giggle when young, snort when old, reject the question, laugh at the topic and the like. The male members of a society frequently see the ethnographer's difficulties as simply a caricature of their own daily case." If in our own daily case women regard it as no longer seemly to giggle or to snort, when unaccompanied by male categories of power and organization; they often seem to select us and our concerns, as supremely irrelevant to some other reality which exists unperceived by us within our own society.

Of course we may be right to regard the world according to our own traditions, and we have at least the

biological justification of success. But (since self-awareness is not a political virtue) we seldom take the chance to stand outside ourselves, and consider the oddity of our world-view and its origins. It is a remarkable feature of this wise and complex book by M. I. Finley that he faces such questions, if only from the historical point of view: "Politics in our sense rank among the rarities of human activities in the pre-modern world." Nor is the practice of politics ever quantitatively an important part of even Western human activity.

Professional politicians, whether in the ancient Graeco-Roman or in the contemporary context, are quantitatively a negligible minority of the citizen-body. For them politics are a way of life, even though they believe, or at least persuade themselves, that their role is to advance the good of the society in which they operate; that, in other words, politics are a second-order activity designed to achieve objectives that are in themselves not political. For everyone else politics are wholly instrumental: the objectives themselves are what matter in the end.

Therefore, we may add, for everyone else politics is only interesting in so far as change is in question. Why should we be organized? Why should we desire change rather than continuity? Why should we not prefer to be left alone to cultivate our gardens? Why indeed does this small minority of politicians and those who feed on them think that they make any difference to the real world? Even they (and the Ancient World was no different) spend most of their time in the more normal pursuits of eating, drinking, sleeping and making love. Why do they use that gift of language for such boring things, when they could be discussing the state of their souls or singing or giving expression to their natural desires?

The Greeks started it, and their chief responsibility lies in making politics accessible to all. Not everyone approved of this universalization of the political model. Plato thought that it should be confined to the few, who should themselves have other ends in view. A later generation looked back on the classical city-state with horror: much of Hellenistic philosophy is concerned with the flight from the city-state, which is why we often like to regard it as a decline, a failure of nerve. Diogenes thought you could live in a barrel and despise your fellow men; Epicurus thought you could live in a garden and seek true pleasure—politics was an irrelevant disturbance of the psyche. The Stoics thought you could avoid decisions by being uncertain about everything. But these are mere defences against the successful politicalization of their society.

At the lowest level, as even the Epicureans agreed, politics is concerned with survival. The individual needs the group, because the organization of the group ensures his safety. But that is a minimal view, which can leave politics to others.

But we have moved too fast, and

except in emergencies; it does not explain the creation of societies which practise politics as a way of life. The answer lies for Finley in a view which might loosely be described as Marxian, though he is right to insist that he is not a Marxist. Societies are organized for exploitation, internal or external. Politics arose in a struggle to avoid exploitation or to transfer it on to others. The Greeks sought to free themselves from the exploitation of a ruling class; they were successful because in small face-to-face societies the instruments of oppression were too obvious, the class of the oppressed, the nobles, the poor, the noble, the worthy, the best, the beautiful-and-good, the fat, the mean, the worthless, the mob. The second observation is essentially modern (though Aristotle was aware of it): it is the existence of a close relationship between the emergence of the politicized community and the emergence of citizen armies. Finley's emphasis on the problems of coercion and consent in small communities is essentially a restatement of the view put forward by Antony Andrews nearly thirty years ago and since widely discussed, that the advent in the seventh century of a heavily armed citizen militia of hoplites, which enabled the Greeks and later the Macedonians and Romans to dominate the Mediterranean and Middle East, also meant the creation of politics, for precisely the reasons which Finley explains.

In this analysis the Greeks are seen, and see themselves, as politically rational. There is little room here for the primitivization of ancient politics so loved of modern students who seek to assimilate the Greeks to some tribal model. Kin and clan play no part, patronage and authority (as Finley argues in a fascinating chapter) are minimal and essentially subordinate to the needs of politics. I have doubts. Ignoring the question of survivals from a pre-political age, Finley himself has argued for the importance of status over class in *The Ancient Economy* (1973); and recognizes that some contradiction is involved in the stress on the importance of class in his analysis of politics. The problem is how deep this contradiction runs, and whether we should not also consider the claims of kinship groups. We do not need a simple model: Meyer Fortes has argued convincingly that it is precisely the complexity of social groupings and the conflicting pressures they create which offer space for individual freedom; to my mind the intellectual development of ancient Greece is a supreme example of this process. Nor is it easy to see the atrocities committed in the course of ancient *stasis* as solely a consequence of economic forces.

To take two famous examples, when in 424 BC the "Coreyans of the town" finally captured the stronghold of the "Coreyans of the mountain", they tricked their prisoners into voiding the terms of their surrender to the Athenians: The prisoners thus handed over were shut up by the Coreyans in a large

building, and afterwards taken out by twenties and led past two lines of heavy infantry, one on each side, being bound together, and beaten and stabbed by the men in the lines whenever any saw pass a person enemy; while men carrying whips went by their side and hastened on the road those that walked too slowly. When the prisoners discovered what was happening, they barricaded themselves inside and begged in vain to be killed by the Athenian troops present. The Coreyans then took the roof off the building, threw down the tiles and let fly arrows at them, from which the prisoners sheltered themselves as well as they could. Most of their number, meanwhile, were engaged in killing themselves by thrusting into their throats the arrows shot by the enemy, and hanging themselves with the cords taken from some beds, that happened to be there, and with strips made from their clothing; adopting, in short, every possible means of self-destruction, and also falling victims to the missiles of their enemies on the roof. Night came on while these horrors were enacting, and most of it had passed before they were concluded. When it was day the Coreyans threw them in layers upon wagons and carried them out of the city. All the women taken in the stronghold were sold as slaves. (Thucydides 4, 46-8)

Earlier, in sixth-century Miletus, the party of Wealth, the Perpetual Sailors, had fought the Barefists; the poor seized the children of the rich, herded them into granaries and had them trampled to death by oxen; in retaliation the rich smeared the poor and their children with pitch and set them alight. My point is that, though both these instances are portrayed as struggles between rich and poor, that in itself is not sufficient to explain the actions; there must surely also be a social dimension involved.

Yet Finley is right in seeing the Greeks as at least striving towards political rationality: this drive is what created our Western tradition. In classical Athens the progressive subordination of the family and kinship groups to the state is clear, as the state sought to control and use pre-state institutions to define and regulate membership; and if Athens is likely to be more "advanced", it may also serve as a model. With Rome however the problem is more difficult. Finley's discussion is devoted to overturning the prevalent modern view of Roman politics (based on late Roman evidence), that it was an empty struggle for political personalities for wealth and power, based on traditional support-blocks known as *clientela*, the Roman version of a patronage or (in the wide sense) kinship group; this basic social model gradually evolved to include larger sections of the community such as cities, armies and even provinces. For Finley "kinship, real or putative, is not what gave the aristocracy its hold over the common people" in either Greece or Rome.

Neither of these views can be proved or disproved, if only because there is no coherent evidence for third and second-century Roman politics apart from lists of magistrates: that is one of the attractions of making the period into a golden age. We can dimly see the society of early Rome racked by political violence; we simply do not know if the consequences of that violence were the establishment of politics involving participation between the orders or the acceptance of a patronage system. Finley appeals to an unpublished paper by P. A. Brunt, which at least in the earlier version known to me seemed (against its intention) to suggest that the Greeks were indeed right when they saw that a basic difference between their political world and that of the Romans lay in the importance, at Rome of patronage groups. At least the new view will be controversial: it is only three years since the discovery in Latium of a dedication by the *suodectes* of the first consul of the Roman Republic, Publius Valerius, to Mars: are these warriors not a patronage group like the claudians of the Claudii and the Fabii.

The Return

It is almost dark when you come jogging through the lounge wall,
Aflax under a vest tucked into serge trousers—
Your wake is seaweed, salt . . . You pause by my chair, panting.

Silvers of skin stipple your sunburnt scalp. Pabbles
And seed swirl each turn up. Unfolding for ears looped
With hairs you tump a pipe, then sneeze. The fire flutters.

'Grandad' I cry in a voice squashed between twenty years;
'Where have you been bolidaying alone all this time?
Bude, Rhyll, St. Ives?' You wink and, bending double,

Press both palms to the hearthrug. Next your heels are up
And against the mantelpiece—your face reversed, glowing
The handstand lasts all night. All night dribbling grains

Runnel your chin and soft as moth wings in the stillness
Mint plop from a bag in your pocket to the floor.

D. W. Hartnett

Giving them the tools

Lawrence Freedman

NICOLE BALL and MILTON LEITENBERG (Editors).

The Structure of the Defence Industry: An International Survey 372pp. Croom Helm. £17.95. 0 7099 1611 6

GAVIN KENNEDY

Defence Economics 248pp. Duckworth. £19.50 (paperback, £7.95). 0 7156 1687 0

INGEMAR DÖRTER

Arms Deal: The Selling of the F-16 287pp. New York: Praeger. 0 03 062369 3

JOHN EDWARDS

Superweapon: the Making of MX 287pp. Norton. £12.25. 0 393 01523 8

C. A. SORRELS

US Cruise Missile Programs: Development, Deployment and Implications for Arms Control 250pp. Oxford: Brassey. £29.50

The manufacture and sale of arms has never been considered a wholesome way of making large profits. It creates a perverse stake in tension, crisis and war which inevitably encourages a widespread suspicion that the arms manufacturers habitually seek to promote the very events that the rest of the international community are so anxious to prevent. The critiques of the "merchants of death" that had been fashionable in the 1930s returned in the 1960s during the Vietnam War, this time directed against the "military industrial complex" or the "Permanent Arms Economy". More recently there have been suggestions that the nuclear arms race would have been abandoned years ago were it not for the need of the US aerospace companies (and their Soviet counterparts) for a steady stream of new projects.

Anybody who has observed the skill and determination with which the main defence contractors seize on every opportunity to promote their wares, cannot dismiss such notions lightly.

With the larger military orders the health of key industrial sectors is at stake. One does not have to be a conspiracy theorist to recognize the influence of such factors on governments; what is necessary is to keep it in perspective.

The collection of essays on the structure of a number of defence industries gathered by Nicole Ball and Milton Leitenberg provides a useful starting-point. The core of the book is nine essays on individual countries - East, West and non-aligned - plus a broad look at developing countries by Herbert Wulf and a statistical appendix on the United Kingdom (as a substitute for an undelivered manuscript). The contributors, including authorities like David Holloway on the Soviet Union and Sidney Jammes on China, were asked to provide hard information on such matters as the international organization of the defence industry and its relation to the rest of the economy, and by large they have obliged.

If there is an underlying motive, it is to assess the extent to which the industrial factor would provide both an economic and political barrier to disarmament. This is brought out clearly in an introductory chapter by Frank Blackaby. Blackaby obviously thinks military spending generally wasteful, but he is careful not to exaggerate its malign effects. His view that radical disarmament need not pose insuperable economic problems tends to be supported by the chapters on individual countries. On the other hand, few of the authors seem to expect this issue to arise. Edward Kolodziej concludes his thorough study of France: "For the foreseeable future, and for compelling strategic economic and political reasons, the French arms industry is here to stay."

The Bell and Leitenberg collection is useful primarily for the range of countries it considers. As the editors admit in their introduction, a substantial amount of information and analysis is already available on the major Western powers. Gavin Kennedy provides an admirable guide through this literature as he examines the economic dimension to the defence debate. He takes on many of the Marxist and other radical critics of the defence sector, pointing out the tension between those who argue that it has become essential for the functioning of modern capitalism, and

those who argue that it is, if anything, dysfunctional.

Many of the critics assume defence spending to be inherently undesirable, in contrast to other forms of public expenditure. Kennedy argues that when it comes to inhibiting productive investment, all public expenditure on non-market activities has much the same effect, and that to single defence out is a value judgment. Thus, it has become the inevitable response by the left to criticism of the cost of any social project to look to a reallocation of funds from the defence budget. Conservatives often make a similar mistake: they are happy to argue for defence spending as a spur to the rest of the economy contrary to their general view about the depressing effects of government spending.

Kennedy also notes the lack of evidence to support the proposition that economic interests shape the overall defence and foreign policies of a nation. Looking at the United States, he finds that the "military-industry complex" is by no means dominant in American industry, "though particular defence contractors may dominate particular industries, such as aircraft and missiles". But even in these areas the economic power of the manufacturers is not that great and cannot explain the considerable influence that has been exercised by these firms.

Such explanations require a political rather than an economic analysis. Fortunately, there is now a wealth of case studies on individual weapons projects. The combination of high budgets, high security and high politics is irresistible. It tells us something about contemporary military affairs that we now have far more biographies of modern weapons than of modern generals.

Of the three new studies under review, that by Ingemar Dörter has been the most eagerly awaited. After some extraordinarily thorough research, Dörter is able to tell the story of how in 1975 General Dynamics sold F-16 fighter aircraft to Denmark, Norway, Belgium and the Netherlands. This is not a story of a monopolistic supplier forcing the hand of government, but of rough compulsion between corporations from a number of countries. It has to be said that for all its merits this is not the easiest of books to read, partly because of the unfamiliarity of the main characters and the technicality of the issues

involved, but also because of Dörter's style. The problem is not so much that he is a Swede writing in English, but that in his research he has picked up the idiom of the aerospace industry and this tends to jar.

In his description of the complex decision-making Dörter brings out the importance of industrial and technical considerations, but his most important conclusion is that, in the end, these took second place to high policy. For the smaller European countries, the eventual choice between the American F-16 and the French Mirage appeared as one of NATO loyalty versus European unity. Dörter concludes: "National security and foreign policy more than money and employment were the primary concerns of the political leadership in the end."

An easier book to read is John Edwards's study of the history of the M-X ICBM. The USAF and Martin Marietta have certainly been persistent in keeping this project going despite all its setbacks. However, again the key decisions reflect strategic and political judgments and were often taken despite economic and technical considerations. What is remarkable about the M-X is the extent to which a decade of strikingly futile, even farcical, decision-making was inspired by a highly dubious concept of nuclear strategy. This asserted that even if the Soviet Union lacked the ability to destroy all of America's means of retaliation in a first strike, it could still be dangerous if one key component - the land-based ICBMs - became vulnerable to surprise attack. So the key word became "survivability", and Congressmen and administrators searched for a way to deploy the missile to protect it from the worst the USSR could throw against it. To complicate matters further, such a scheme had to conform to the demands of an arms control regime. The Russians had to be able to find M-X in sufficient extent to verify its numbers, but not to the extent of being able to target it successfully.

Literally hundreds of schemes for M-X were considered throughout the 1970s. As soon as one was agreed profound practical objections caused it to be discarded. Edwards's main interest is with the decision of the Carter Administration to opt for a horrendous multiphase scheme, at a potential cost of tens of billions of dollars. He shows how the multi-

plication of uncertainties almost overwhelmed the careful and elaborate analysis of the Pentagon. The cost estimate was "pulled out of the air". A missile with a large diameter was chosen, despite the extra problems this posed for mobility, because the Air Force wanted to undermine the case for making a common missile with the Navy and Presidential Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, was impressed by its size.

The pace of the adoption and the rejection of new basing modes coincided with the coming of the Reagan Administration. Although he notes that this development, Edward's narrative ends before the missile reached in late 1982 with the choice of the "Dense Pack" system, in which the missiles are placed sufficiently close to incoming warheads to destroy each other - through the "fratricide effect" rather than the missiles in the ground. Congress was unimpressed and within a few months "dense pack" had been abandoned. Reagan turned to the expedient of a bipartisan commission to declare the "survivability problem" insoluble and allowed the M-X to continue so long as there was a serious effort to bargain it away in arms control.

Charles Sorrells notes in his extensive survey of US cruise missiles that a detailed operational requirement appeared rather belatedly "because the combination of high-level political support that removed the program from some initial procedural steps in defining requirements and the lack of experience or, sometimes, hostility within the services". The services were held back because of the threat that cruise missiles posed to their most prestigious programmes - such as aircraft carriers for the Navy and tactical aircraft for the Air Force.

Sorrells's book is very much for a specialist, who will find it a valuable source of reference. The coverage of the material, and the coverage of many essentially third-order issues, means that it is not always possible to keep sight of those of the first order. The face of sub-heads such as "New Term Upgrades and Advanced Follow-on Systems" and "Penetratingly Aggressive Terminally Defended Targets" are, however, those interested in the technical foundations of some controversial decisions will find much to keep them reading.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ALISTAIR DAVIES

An Annotated Critical Bibliography of Modernism 361pp. Brighton: Harvester. £28.50. 0 7108 0031 2

The first essay whose title asked the question "What was Modernism?" appeared in 1960, the work of Harry Levin. The second, by Robert Martin Adams, appeared in 1978. The same question serves as the implicit subtitle of Alistair Davies's useful bibliography. By modernism Mr Davies means literary modernism in twentieth-century Britain and Ireland, but he also goes beyond the Channel and across the Atlantic. His bibliography is divided into five large sections: an extensively annotated list of general studies of modernism (numbered MOD 1 through MOD 216), followed by four separate lists of studies of Yeats (ending with WBY 103), Wyndham Lewis (WL47), Lawrence (DHL 167) and Eliot (TSE 128). No explanation is offered for this choice of authors, but a list of forthcoming "Harvester Annotated Critical Bibliographies" in the front of the book includes titles devoted to Joyce and Woolf, to be completed by other hands.

In his "Advice to the Reader" Davies describes his first section as a list of books and essays that "discuss the concept of literary Modernism, account for its origins, describe its literary context and techniques, analyse its influence on fiction, poetry and drama, assess its importance, examine its philosophical, political and social ideas, and consider its relationship with the other arts". There is no point objecting to this personification of modernism as something that affects literature and has ideas of its own, but it is itself neither literature nor an idea; no other writer on the subject has managed to think of a personification any more coherent. What is striking is that Davies attributes to modernism philosophical, political and social ideas, but not psychological ones. This exclusivity extends to the index, which has no entry for psychology and to the texture of the bibliography itself. Davies cites Georg Lukács's critique of modernism's "obsession with pathological and extreme states", but he gives little evidence that modernism was even mildly interested in such things. No one would guess from his list of studies of Lawrence that a furious critical debate ever blew up over the anal sexuality of *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, much less that the issue was important to the history and definition of modernism. And although Davies includes a list of studies of the (hypothetical) relations of T. S. Eliot and Jean Verdenal and their psychological consequences, he renders the question legally by setting the list under the rubric "Autobiography and Libel". He closes the section with the strongest antimodernism to be found in the book. "The reader of such speculation", he

writes of James E. Miller's *T. S. Eliot's Personal Waste Land*, "would do well to recall 'The Dry Salvages': To explore the womb, or tomb, or dreams; all these are usual Pastimes and drugs, and features of the press. And always will be, some of them especially. When there is distress of nations and perplexity..." Such speculation may in fact deserve better than this. Miller's book recently gained strong circumstantial corroboration in an essay by Erwin R. Steinberg in the March *Journal of Modern Literature*. Steinberg uses evidence from Virginia Woolf's diaries and letters to argue that the psychological wounds of Septimus Warren Smith in *Mrs Dalloway* are modelled on what Eliot told Woolf about himself at the time the novel was being written.

Biographical approaches to modernist literature have been in bad odour ever since the New Critics tossed them on the rubbish heap. But the special kind of impersonal approach espoused, implicitly and explicitly, in Davies's choices and annotations is a product of the very recent past. It is most prominent in the work of critics around the age of thirty or younger. An earlier generation of critics, starting around the 1950s, subjected modernist historical and psychological thought to a corrosive criticism from which it has never recovered. Frank Kermode's demolition job on the "dislocation of sensibility", in *Romantic Image*, is a classic and still powerful example of one form of reaction against modernist theories. The almost universal embarrassment felt over Lawrence's fantasies of male dominance is another. The critics of the younger generation who now react again in the modernists' favour are usually wise enough to avoid any effort at a direct rebuttal. (The incoherence of *The Unknows*, for example, is no longer seriously disputed outside the Poundian fan-magazines.) Instead they treat the modernist movement as an advanced postgraduate seminar in philosophy with a special interest in epistemology and linguistics. And dissertations begin to appear with careful modernist theories that like the "objective correlatives", long regarded in some quarters as a figure of fun, make excellent philosophical sense.

But while this strategy succeeds in making modernism more interesting to severe-minded graduate students, it risks making it less interesting to everyone else. The new icon of literary philosophy may be more sturdy than the outworn figure of Eliot-as-pilgrim, but neither is it convincing or instructive as Eliot the ironic, tormented pilgrim in quest of an elusive religious peace. Such a figure deserves criticism more subtle and concrete than recent theoretical methods have been able to provide. Any criticism that hopes to answer the complexity and contradictions of modernism must acknowledge the array of personal uniqueness that went into

that-surround the idea of the universal source, a favourite theme of Renaissance literature. £18.00

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Picking through the wreckage

Edward Mendelson

beurgeoisie or any other malignant and recalcitrant power than to admit the vision was delusory from the start. Davies's choice of authors indicates that he takes it for granted that literary modernism has come to an end - an assumption that seems less polemical every day. About the beginnings of modernism his assumptions are somewhat more polemical. His opening section is titled "Modernism and Romanticism", implicitly favouring the historical interpretations of later critics over those of the modernists themselves, who preferred to speak of their work as a rejection of the Victorian and romantic past and as a revival of renaissance or archaic modes. Davies may find less critical consensus, however, over another of his subject headings, "The American Origins of Modernism", especially as the books and essays listed there do not make quite the argument his rubric implies.

Elsewhere, Davies's organization and comments are a model of tact and good sense. He calls attention to intelligent writing hidden behind obscure imprints or buried in catch-all anthologies. He prefers to be generous in his assessments, but is not dazzled by big names. And he is careful to give equal time to wildly contradictory opinions: for example, Northrop Frye judging Wyndham Lewis an "almost solipsistic writer" while William H. Pritchard, a few entries later, praises his "objectivity and insight".

Davies is less careful over bibliographical detail. He explains that he uses a chronological arrangement within each section "so that the reader might follow more easily the development of a critical discussion or idea". But he generally neglects the first publication of important essays in periodicals and lists only their later appearance in book form. The history of some ideas is consequently muddled. Davies ignores, for example, the famous first publication of Joseph Frank's "Spatial Form in Modern Literature", in the *Sewanee Review* in 1945 and its even better-known appearance in R. W. Stallman's anthology *Critiques and Essays in Criticism* in 1949. Instead he lists only its publication in a collection by Frank published as late as 1963. An essay that opened a continuing debate in modern criticism is thus made to seem a minor and belated comment from the floor. Davies also omits the various challenges to the essay and Frank's replies. "Harry Levin's 'What was Modernism?' is first cited as appearing in a 1962 anthology edited by Stanley Burnshaw and then in one of Levin's books. But Lionel Trilling's "On the Teaching of Modern Literature", which appeared in the same anthology (under a variant title), is cited only in its appearance in one of Trilling's books. Both essays, in fact, had first appeared in quarters a few years earlier, still in Irving Howe's invaluable essay on "The Culture of Modernism" is cited from a book by Howe published in 1971. Howe's 1967 anthology, *The Idea of the Modern*, for which the essay

served as an introduction, is not listed at all, although it contains some important essays not mentioned in the bibliography. Davies's spellings of names should be treated with caution. Some are garbled enough to make it impossible to find the correct version in a library catalogue - Kathleen Kneft (a Beckettian coinage) for Nott. Helen Reguerio for Reguerio.

The index, cunningly devised to achieve the greatest possible confusion and the least possible convenience, is divided into no less than ten alphabetical listings - with separate subject and author lists for each of the book's five sections. The only conceivable excuse for this is to protect a researcher hunting for material on Yeats's views on women (or whatever) from cluttering his mind with Lawrence's views. But even this excuse has no merit. All the entries in the bibliography have coded prefixes identifying the section in which they appear, and no one will be distracted by DHL 18 if he is determined to find his way to WBY 46. And because the subject indexes include the names of some writers who also figure in the author indexes, it is necessary to search through all ten lists in order to find every reference to, say, Robert Groves or Yvor Winters. Even then, one will miss some references, as the anthologies of criticism included in the bibliography are indexed selectively and erratically.

The selections and annotations are better done. They immortalize a few examples of silliness or dryness, while committing few obvious omissions. Some of the apparent omissions are in fact phantasmally present by virtue of their inclusion in ontologies described by Davies in summary form. Inevitably, and through no fault of the compiler, every knowledgeable reader will note some further items that should have been in. Two that would have especially suited Davies's purposes are J. P. Stern's *On Realism* (1973), whose long paragraph on pages 91-92 does more to define the limits of modernism than most of the books and essays listed under that heading, and Randall Jarrell's brief essay, "The End of the Line", which answered the question, "What was modernism?", and knew the question had to be asked in the past tense, as early as 1942.

British Poetry, 1880-1914, edited by Donald E. Stenford (486pp. Detroit: Gale. \$76. 0 8103 1700 1), is Volume 9 of the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. For each of forty-three poets writing during the period - from Lascelles Abercrombie to Yeats - it supplies a list of their major works, an essay by an academic specialist on the life, critical reception and subsequent evaluation of the poetry, with portraits and other illustrations, select bibliographies of biographical and critical books and articles and, for many, notes on the location of manuscripts. The volume closes with a cumulative index to all writers covered in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* Volumes 1-19.

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Explaining the other side

Otto Pick

EDWARD N. LUTTWAK

The Grand Strategy of the Soviet Union 242pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £12.95. 0 297 78217 7

The Centre for Strategic and International Studies at Georgetown University in Washington, where the author of this book is Senior Fellow, provides much of the intellectual content of the Reagan Administration's foreign policy. Edward N. Luttwak's book is a study in the Soviet Union's global strategy in justification of the hard-line approach currently in fashion in Washington derives its main strength from his grasp of historical analogy and from the lucid manner in which he presents his case. It is, in many ways, a curious case.

Dr Luttwak dismisses out of hand the notion that Soviet policy is motivated by ideology. He argues that the political leadership in Moscow consists of tired, disappointed, men demoralized by chronic economic failure, whose ideological zeal has long since been eroded by their enjoyment of the fruits of power, their preoccupation with manipulating the system and by the hopeless task of making the economy work. This may or may not be true, but to discount the ideological factor completely is to ignore a major formative influence on the Soviet decision-making process.

Ideology may be suffering a lingering death in Moscow, although it has been resurrected in Washington. The Soviet leaders may no longer believe that the Marxist millennium is just around the corner, and they may even have abandoned the long-term expectation of the inevitable collapse of capitalism. But the only political language they know is that provided by Marxism-Leninism. Furthermore, their perceptions of the outside world are inevitably affected by the creed which they have professed all their lives: even if they disbelieve what they themselves have been saying, they have no alternative set of paradigms to which they could refer. Marxism-Leninism is, in other words, a religion.

This in many respects the political strategy of the Soviet Union can be understood in ideological terms. The fundamental Leninist concept of inevitable war appears to have played a dominant role in Soviet thinking from 1917 to 1956. The convoluted theories about the "national liberation" struggles in colonial and semi-colonial countries are used to justify Soviet policies in many parts of the Third World, not least in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Soviet Union's foreign policy is essentially opportunistic, and the manipulation of military options, which rightly cause Luttwak so much concern, enables the Soviet Union to seize upon the opportunities as they present themselves. This opportunism seems, at least in part, part of ideological considerations, and shows its presence in a major formative influence on the Soviet decision-making process.

cause must prevail on "scientific" grounds.

From a Western standpoint, this is patent nonsense, but in the absence of any other theoretical explanation of Soviet behaviour, it probably fulfils a necessary function in Moscow. Obviously, ideological considerations cannot be regarded as the one and only policy, but the analysis of Soviet foreign policy, but to disregard them, as Luttwak largely does, is to ignore a crucial factor. He prefers to base his analysis of Soviet strategy on two complementary theories, each greatly influenced by what can almost be described as historical determinism. He argues that the failure of the Soviet system in all respects, except in the development of military strength, has forced the leadership into a position where they have to depend almost exclusively on military power to achieve their goals. Because there is nothing else they can rely on, according to Luttwak, this has been encouraged by what he calls "the great decline in American military power", which has given the Soviet Union the opportunity to establish itself as the military stronger of the two superpowers.

Since military power must be the primary instrument of choice for the Soviet Union, lacking as it is to economic leverage, cultural influence, and social appeal, the appropriate response to the decline of American military power was to increase the Soviet as much as possible. This line of argument is supported by two appendices, which account for the other half of the book. The first, by Robert Black, deals with the evolution

with "The Economic Basis of Soviet Power", while the second, by W. Seth Curtis, documents the "Evolution of Soviet Military Power since 1965".

Curtis stops short in 1981, and thus has to omit significant recent developments, including the continuing deployment of SS-20 theatre nuclear missiles which has caused so much consternation in the West. Neither Black nor Luttwak really come to grips with the basic question of how long the inefficient and in many ways backward Soviet economy can continue to sustain the great burden of military expenditure. There is really no attempt to explain how military supremacy can be founded on economic weakness, except in the short term. This supremacy could, of course, be used to destabilize the transatlantic alliance, whereas, as Luttwak rightly says, current American efforts to restore the military balance appear to have caused further difficulties.

In juxtaposing the Soviet leaders' loss of faith in the economic and social efficacy of their system with their newly acquired "operational" confidence in their armed forces, Luttwak projects a terrifying prospect. For it is notorious that the conjunction of a long-term regime, pessimism, with current military optimism is the classic condition that makes deliberate war more likely. This danger, he maintains, is increased as long as the preferred energy is so weak that he would be unlikely to react with nuclear weapons. Therefore, the only possible response to this perception of the Soviet threat is to rearm. Luttwak buttresses this fundamentalization of the

Reagan Administration's defence policies by invoking historical parallels and by drawing on theories of power politics - great military empires tend to pursue expansionist goals, and view that Soviet postures are essentially defensive he describes as "dated".

Nevertheless, there is some cause for at least for Americans. In this book, at least, the link of direct relations between the two powers, hostile superpowers and potential mutual antagonism. These relations do not, however, apply to the Soviet Union's relations with China. On the contrary, the two countries are long-disputed frontiers, and economic terms China has very little to offer the Soviet Union. Moreover, their relationship has been sourer of racial antipathy and ideological conflict, and it is here perhaps that Luttwak sees the most obvious danger for the future of world peace.

This tract for our times does not make comfortable reading. Although the analysis is largely intuitive and heavily supported by analogy, its conclusions deserve to be taken into account in any assessment of the Soviet Union's grand strategy. There is no proof that the leaders of the Soviet Union are driven by the intuitive that Luttwak ascribes to them, but there is also no conclusive evidence to the contrary. As long as this is the case, arguments have to be made, and obviously this is exactly what the Reagan Administration has done.

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Hugh Brogan

**Tumultuous Years: The Presidency
of Harry S. Truman 1949-1953**
444p. Norton. £13.95.
0 393 01619 6

It is only useful to compare Korea and Vietnam because the American policymakers in the Truman Administration clearly did not. Dean Rusk, for example, was influential in both cases and like all so many others assumed that the cases were the same, demanding the same response. In reality the complex which the Truman Administration had to face in 1950 were not like those confronting MacArthur in 1951, nor were they like those which perplexed Lyndon Johnson. A sudden crisis arose which could have been averted had American statesmen been clearer about their views of Korea and given it a higher priority among their problems. But once the North Korean invasion had started the Truman Administration had no choice but to respond as it did. The Korean crisis led this hard to accept because the Koreans employed were the same as those earlier in connection with the Vietnamese adventure. Yet they were objectively compelling. America's position as guardian of the Free World had largely rested on bluff since 1945; now the bluff had been called. To



"Water Tank", on oil painting by Tsujimoto's images of America (2 University of Washington Press



Raisson Crawford, c1938: from Karen
48pp, with 91 illustrations, 24 in colour,
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Yet even in his own day the institutions were gaining ground. One of the notable features of Deane's book is the fact that long stretches are devoted to the President. That is a sign of the President's power. It should be. A President is the sum of the thoughts and deeds of a nation even if he occupies the Oval Office. Times the individual Harry Tamm seems wholly swallowed up by the President—a thing he was keenly aware of himself. He was a strong man, but was by no means wholly mastered by the American government, any more than his successors have been (with the possible exception of Johnson and Nixon). It is not the least of Mr. Deane's merits that he forces his readers to assess the institution, as well as the man; for the institution is still so strong, working notably less well than thirty years ago, and some of its originalists still press for malaise and doom to the pearly days of S. Truman.

A. HALLAM
Great Geological Controversies
182pp. Oxford University Press. £15
(paperback, £7.95)
0 19 854431 6

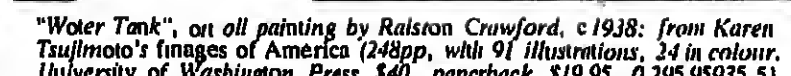
We should therefore be doubly grateful for these eminent geologists such as Anthony Hallam who, tired of the stagey clichés, are prepared to scrutinize geology a'ergins afresh, and even revisionism on their colleagues. In his earlier *A Revolution in the Earth Sciences*, Professor Hallam boldly interpreted the long-delayed triumph of Continental Drift in terms of Kuhn's theory that science changes through "revolutions" involving "paradigm switches". His new book, though perky and drawing on familiar material, is even more ambitious, examining the dynamics of geology over two

. Hallam's subversiveness may be all the more effective because he avoids

On plate tectonics, Hallam is still quite Kuhnian. But he professes a different conceptual map to help us thread our way through earlier controversies, since for these Kuhn seems too cataclysmic. Take the Uniformitarian/Catastrophist debate. Kuhn himself averred that Lyell's (1830) transformed geology at a stroke, inducing a new scientific paradigm. First, but, building on C. D. Hooykaas and Martin Rudwick, Hallam argues that this oversimplifies and telescopes the record. Uniformitarianism triumphed, but it triumphed neither instantly nor completely. During a decade of negotiation and modification, Lyell's

For Hallam is not a radical relativist. Stand close to them, and the conversation may seem a bit sound and furry, signifying nothing. Stand back, and a progressive logic is revealed. Had not Uniformism triumphed, there would have been no physics for Uniformitarianism; in turn, Uniformitarianism's victory opened the door to our understanding of the vast antiquity of the Earth. But what if it had not? However Hallam's confidence in cumulative progress tempts fate, future revisions to our estimates of the age of the Earth, he tells us, are likely to be "insignificant." What might it have written in this vein twenty-five years back about the permanency of the continents? Yet, in snuffing progress, he also celebrates the positivist accumulation of facts, by appreciating the resilience of theory. Through Lakatos he recognizes that theories don't stand or fall on the basis of a single falsifiability test, for they are extraordinarily wily engines of alter-

For all that, this assured a vigorous book is most welcome. We are lucky to have geologists like Professor Hallam who do not toy with history merely as an after-dinner diversion.



"Water Tank", oil painting by Ralston Crawford, c1938: from Karen Tsujimoto's *finages of America* (248pp, with 91 illustrations, 24 in colour, University of Washington Press, \$40, paperback \$19.95 0 205 05025 5).

Roy Porter

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Jim Crace

William Leont Hent Moon is resolutely dismissive, "on several distinct occasions in his American travels." *Three Highways*, of what is called "apple indiana" — that is, a reskinning of white inwards: an Uncle Tom's Cabin. What should be made of himself? The name is Indiana. But few, well-hidden, clues in, a otherwise remarkable for its lack of candour, point to a pre-publication of Moon who has the looks, demeanour and sensibility of a white American. He teaches Literature at a college in Missouri; his politics are East Coast radical green; the "horizontal positions" of some, reminds of a painting by Turner, Anomalous to credit card, and to claim Bill Trosdon.

On February 17, 1981, Trehearst said that he had never met post and that his acquaintance was, indeed, a "new friend." He said he services his clients through a Ford van, packs a case of tapes, a microcassette recorder and two microcassette tapes, and carries a megaphone (Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and Neiland's *Black Elk Speaks* are on one of his thirteen tapes). He said he had been told to plant, to avoid identification, a "Congoled" his in an "athletic chair tube" and to follow him "blue highways," those "van backgrounds marked on the map." Part of his purpose, he said, is to be inconspicuous so "nobody would come from disoriented disrupted customs." The other part of his purpose (why else the record would be called *America*?) is to "hit" back "which in its case is a more product-endorsing record. Penny Warren, a "red place," a "displacement" started, Bill Aydin. The president in his youth.

First Impressions that *Blue Highways* is a bogus concoction. Indian-ness at best a romantic affectation, at worst a marketing deceit, are consolidated by Moon in initial narrative manner (solémn ar pontifical) and his fondness for al deliberations. "Beware thoughts th come in the night", he advises in book's opening sentence. "They aren't turned properly; they come in askew free of sense and restriction, derivin from the most remote of sources. Beware thoughts that come in the morning, or in the bath, would have done just as well and imparted just little. Thus far, *Blue Highways* is serving kookum. But once the journey under way and the worldly vanities the banished confessions room; reed- the author, Moon's main relating. His, and of name- Moon, it becomes clear, is not a regardment but an act of self-claim. It declares the author's determination not to mope and avoid the public massaging of his self. This is not to be a journey self-exploration, with the United States as backdrop to the tragedy being Troglodyte, the solace of being Moon. The author - whatever identity - is not the subject of *Blue Highways*. Under objective scrutiny are those small and threatening settlements in side-route America, which fast roads and fast foods have to federalize.

"Randomness was the rule," writes Moon - yet there is a discernible logic to his route-making. Any town with an odd name, *van le dende*. Traditionally, the honour of having the funnest place name belongs to Intercourse, Pennsylvania.

Compared to those previous O. The Readers (whom Norman P. horetz dismissed as "knew-nothing bohemiens") Moon's erudition is alarmingly wide-ranging and eclectic. One regrets his academic fondness for quotation — his source range from Proudhon and Gartrud Stein to John L. Carré and Hela Keller, as well as many disruptive snippets of Whitman. But his informative digressions on American architecture, history and folklore are delicately and modestly presented. His reports on the American emerald trade, on cooking gumbo and crawdad, and on the treatment of hemorrhoids ("cayenne, nutmeg and flour"), and comments on the flavor of Kickapoo Joy Juice ("Injun Piss"). The reader's *vide-mecum* should be copy of the Rand-McNally atlas, use by Moon (his volume is niggardly on maps), chart, locales' only saved to *Dictionary of American Slang*. It discloses the nature of lollypoppin' at the identity of mantangs, bindlestiff and simoleons.

It may be that *Blue Highways* over-encrusted with folwage, though

Most impressive is Moon's bare, immitigably reconstructing how the chink and cassette recorder captures the incoherent, incoherent colloquutions of village Americans with time on their hands. "This is the black 'project' you know," Almbana ("We gotta show our brothers they can do more than hating cool like meat in a locker," says a citizen of Dime Box, a village where the express news locates ("Can't live off a tree, and a tree unless you can't speak"), and Cerollina storekeeper, introducing a flat county "while the white country don't let us up in the hills" than a boy can throw a mud ball).

Moon is at his best when he eases — among blacks in the West, among Indians in the West, among men who don't welcome the stranger, and out-of-state — to the stranger. He is at his weakest in the journey's end, in the face of the East Coast, where his fiction stays on the road topically, little spruce sounds nice, and back [home], comments on nonsense Arizona in bulldozers and, Boss-of-the-Plains, stunts, hearing the outline of a world. "Don't have to go back with a he replies, Precisely. In the morphosis from frog to toad," the author, now back in America, has unearthed a native, and America, which belongs to an

The history of Geology has up till recently had few practitioners. Mott T. Greene's most welcome book is another indication that it is beginning to wake up, as it should be, for geology and its historical development are important subjects. As John Woodward wrote in 1728, "Metals in Minerals are . . . of that high Value . . . that they merit . . . our utmost Study and Attention. A great Share of our Wealth and Strength, our Happiness and Security both at Home and Abroad depend very much upon them". Two hundred and fifty years on, this statement is much the same; the provision of energy and the exploitation of the earth's dwindling natural resources depend first on the ability of geologists to locate them.

The title of Professor Greene's book arouses high hopes that it will analyze these topics, and that the whole range of geology in the nineteenth century. Alas, the title is misleading. The book is the history of that branch of geology which geologists call geotectonics; that is, the architectural arrangement of the materials of which the earth's crust is made, e.g. continent or ocean, bedded or intruded, disturbed by faults or folded by folds. It relates to the structures of rocks only, and to call this geology is as misleading as to restrict the description of a city to its buildings without discussion of its roads and whences they were derived or the number and peculiarities of its inhabitants.

Once this limitation is recognized, Professor Greene's book can be welcomed as an important study of the development of tectonic theory in the nineteenth century within the framework of the global tectonic theories -- the last

The first of the tectonic theories the Greene documents is that of the French geologist, Elie de Beaumont, and his followers. This theory, that a cooling and contraction of the earth's surface, and a contracting earth had suffered the process a series of paroxysms during which mountain-chains were created, resulting in floral and faunal extinctions, was in great contrast to the more steady-state view of the earth's development advanced by Charles Lyell at the same time. Greene does well to point out that these rival theories both had their followers, since English-speaking (and reading) geologists have for a long been persuaded that Lyell's was the only serious theory on offer at the time. The fact that Beaumont's on offer at the same time. The fact that Beaumont's theory has recently been called ("the Greengate publication to which Greene makes reference") an "attractive but incomplete hypothesis" based on "incomplete, and frequently uncorroborated, determinations of the ages of rock strata in the mountains ranges under consideration" suggests that there will be more debate on the subject.


The third of Greene's hypotheses is that of the American, Thomas C. Chamberlin, who, on more theoretical lines, harmonized a new version of contracting earth with an original isostatic hypothesis. Again, Greene explains very well what was at issue and how the hypothesis grew.

To offset this command of his subject, however, there are a few disappointments. Greene is a historian by training, but despite this advantage he fails to grasp "the similarities between history and geology" where time is of the essence for both. It seems to regard the section on syntheses he explores as "the ultimate aim of geology," but the ultimate aim of geology is surely the study of the structure, composition and history of the earth. Documentation of the successive changes that have taken place is at least as important as the consideration of how those changes have been effected, and the crucial element here is time, both relative and absolute. Greene hardly considers the geological time-scales which were thought likely in the period he is writing about. It seems difficult to separate the "catastrophes" from the "uniformitarian" (or gradualist) "conformations" without some such consideration. Can a catastrophe, for instance, be also gradual? In the Yorkshire vicar-geologist who, in 1840, quarrelled with the Lyellian view of the origin of his local rocks as catastrophist, because he argued for essentially gradual rates of deposition of sediments, at 900 feet per month

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The second global hypothesis is the one of the Austrian, Edward Suess (1831-1914), who explained mountain-chains

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The book is well-produced and well-written. There are, however, a number of errors in personal names and titles and the index could have been improved. The bibliography runs over fifteen pages but it is a surprise to find nothing cited in it more recent than 1967.

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